



March 11, 2022

Testimony in support of Senate Bill 350 An Act Establishing Juneteenth Independence Day As A Legal Holiday.

Good afternoon Co-Chairs Flexer and Fox, Ranking Members Sampson and Mastrofrancesco and honorable members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee.

My name is Subira Gordon and I am here to testify in support of Senate Bill 350 which would establish Juneteenth Independence Day as a legal holiday.

Thank you for putting this legislation forward and today's public hearing. I enthusiastically urge a favorable vote as this bill's importance cannot be overstated.

Passage of SB 350 would be Connecticut's recognition of a more complete version of American history. This legislature also has a chance to take a step toward repentance on behalf of our nation. And, you must.

According to a **2021 Gallup survey**, more than 60 percent of Americans know "nothing at all" or only "a little bit" about Juneteenth. Interestingly, it is our young adults who are more likely to know a lot, some or a little bit about Juneteenth.

The oppression and dehumanization of people in America continued long after slavery was abolished. And, we continue to fight to bring truth to light about how segregation continues to permeate throughout American society.

Connecticut has an opportunity to join a group of states that have recognized Juneteenth as an official state holiday including Texas (1980), Massachusetts (2007), New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania & Virginia (2020), and Washington & Oregon (2021).

Juneteenth is the oldest known celebration of the end of slavery in America. Connecticut residents would benefit from an official recognition through education and time for reflection about where America has been, where we are and where we're going.

Thank you for your time and consideration. If you have any questions, please let me know. I can be reached at 207-689-6339 or Subira.Gordon@conncan.org.

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